He Worketh With Us.

BY E. W. MUND.

Though hard be the labor, and bitter the toil,
No harvest brings pleasure, unfruitful the soil:
Yet labor is sweet, though its only reward
The joy of the thought—with us worketh the Lord.

He shares all the bitter, he shares all the pain,
And sharing transforms them to rapture again;
While feeling our weakness, our weariness sore,
He grants us the rest that endures evermore.

He worketh with us? Then no toil can be vain
In which he engages, there surely is gain!
The harvests most precious do oft ripen late,
'Tis his to give increase, 'tis ours still to wait.

He worketh with us! Oh, companionship sweet!
That makes the fierce battle a peaceful retreat;
That binds the wild forces of sin that affright;
And girs with omnipotence us for the right.

Amusements.

Some of the most practical questions of the day are connected with the subject of amusements. Many find considerable difficulty in deciding as to the rightness or wrongness of certain amusements. Some go so far as to pronounce nearly all amusements wrong, while more are too apt to indulge themselves in things contary to the spirit of Christ's teachings.

Our Lord laid down no arbitrary rules in regard to this subject. No lists of holy and unholy amusements are given in the New Testament. In the nature of the case there could not be. Many things that are not in themselves wrong are wrong because of their associations and influence. Christ and his apostles do, however, give certain principles by which we can test an amusement. These principles are not derived from superstition or morbid ideas of life and religion. In using these principles all will not come to the same conclusion in regard to certain amusements, hence a large charity must be exercised towards those who differ from us. I will give certain rules which I think will meet the approbation of the candid reader, though possibly all my deductions from them may not.

1. Amusements that lead to evil associations should be shunned. We can not habitually associate with the vile without becoming contaminated. Let fruit be ever so beautiful and wholesome, if you place it in proximity to that which is decayed it will soon be spoiled. For this reason if for no other, public dances, skating-rinks, and circuses are to be avoided. The evil that has resulted to the morals of young people through their associations at the skating-rink can not be estimated. All classes attend them, including many whose chief purpose is to ruin character. They often appear well. They are polite, but beneath their outward polish is moral corruption which will appear when their victims are secured. It is right to associate with the wicked for the purpose of doing them good. Jesus ate with publicans and sinners. But if you are not making your associates better be sure that they are making you worse. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." "Be not deceived; evil company doth corrupt good manners." 1. Cor. 15: 33. (Revised version.)

2. Such amusements as involve dishonest principles can not be righteously patronized. Many games are played for money or some other reward. The principle of the gospel is that we should earn what we receive unless, perchance, some friend may wish to make us a gift. Churches which encourage lottery schemes for the sake of obtaining money to carry on their work are not free from guilt. The Christian can not consistently attend a horse race where gambling is its chief promoter. Base ball, which may be the means of needed recreation, has become in many places the cause of much gambling and attendant evils. When this is the case it should be given up. Even the pleasant game of croquet is often made a teacher of dishonesty, destroying both its use and enjoyment. As soon as dishonesty is detected in a game the Christian should refuse to play. It may not be necessary for him to give up the recreation entirely; for on the same principle, if he is a farmer, he might have to give up selling apples because some do it dishonestly. Yet if the temptation to use dishonest means in a game is a strong one it is better to wholly abandon it.

3. Amusements that lead to sensualism should be discarded. This is usually the tendency of the dance and the theater. Said a professor in a western college, "I have attended the theater a few times, and I wish, to-day, I could get rid of the pictures that come up in my mind as the result of it." These theaters were not of the lower class, yet their tendency was to breed impure thoughts. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong," is an injunction of Paul that applies here as well as elsewhere.

4. We are not at liberty to engage in anything that will have a bad influence over others. If our course is likely to lead others downward we ought to deny ourselves for their good. The parlor dance may not always have a direct influence for evil, but if a select company of Christians may dance, will not others make it an excuse for themselves in different circumstances? Again, as there is no visible line between a respectable company and a lower class, how will one know where to leave off? Doubtless, a game of cards might be played with no direct evil effects, but what will be its influence, and where will it lead? Paul says, "If meat makes my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore. that I make not my brother to stumble." In Philippians he teaches that we should look not only to our own things but also to the things of others.

5. It is not proper to devote time to amusements that ought to be given to work or study. Too many people live to be amused. This is not the purpose of life. When one is wearied with mental or physical labor some amusement like tennis or croquet may be beneficial, but to be always engaged in amusements is to make a farce of life. It is too true that recreation is sought most by those who need it least. We must work while it is day for the night cometh.

6. It is evident that Christ would not approve of amusements that are physically injurious. Many amusements that are prolonged late at night are to be discarded for this reason. Our physicians condemn skating-rinks on this ground.

7. Amusements that diminish our spirituality or cause us to lose our taste for religious things should be discarded. If any amusement draws us from the prayer-meeting or causes us to neglect our private devotions, we may know that it is not of God. Unless we can ask God's blessing on our course we should take a different one. We should never go where we can not take Jesus with us, and as Jesus was no recluse while here on earth, we may expect him now to go with us in spirit to all proper places. We may invite him as did that family in Cana of Galilee to the wedding, which he blessed by his presence and miracle. Christ has an interest in our pleasures and social life. In considering the sorrows of his life we are too apt to forget the bright and joyful opening of his ministry at Cana. His life was characterized by sympathy with men, by gentleness and affability. Men instinctively drew near him. At the feast in Cana we have no reason to suppose that he was otherwise than cheerful. Long-faced religion does not find its authority in him. He was not a dyspeptic. He enjoyed human society, and it was the earnest desire of his soul to make society more cheerful and gladsome by infusing into it a new and purer life. We must not, however, suppose that he approved of all that was done at the feast in Cana. He could not go anywhere without meeting sin. From this it was his purpose to rescue men, not by making their lives miserable, but by giving them a new source of joy in holy living. If we take Jesus with us we can not err. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."—*George B. Hopkins, in The Morning Star.*

Quiet Service.

True Christian service has no outward bustle and noise—no running hither and thither—but, like light, it cannot be hid. Quietly it beams wherever it exists. It is calm as the gentle heat of the summer sun noislessly warming all around. Thus energized by the life from above, meet parent and child, friend and neighbor, rich and poor, and the brighter will be your "crown of righteousness" in that day of prize-giving, when you shall receive the "well done"—the Master's reward for the cup of cold water, and the sparkling gems of saved souls. It will then appear that it was better to have spoken "five words" (1 Cor. 14: 19) for God than to have spoken "ten thousand words" to make "a fair show in the flesh" (Gal. 6: 13) and please men—better to have been eloquent for God in the calm silence of a life pointing to Jesus than to have made earth to ring with high-sounding words and world-patching schemes.

"It was not any word that was ever spoken to me," said an old and oft-approved servant of God to a brother in the Lord, from whom I heard the narrative; it was no word that wakened me up from my death of sin, but the movement of a dying man's finger. My mother had often prayed for me, and tried to lead me to Jesus; but I hated God, and when I escaped from her control; grew to be a wild sinner and such a bold infidel that all her godly friends were afraid to see me; but, in the providence of God, I was left to watch alone by the bedside of a tailor, a poor deformed fellow, when he lay a-dying. He had often spoken to me of Jesus, but I had never heeded him more than my mother or any of the others. When I was nursing him there that day he plead with me many times to mind my soul, but I was perfectly hard; all he could say had no effect. But at last when the death-rattle was in his throat, and I saw he could speak no longer, he just raised his hand and pointed with his finger to the sky. *That* stirred me, and I had no rest afterward till Jesus gave me rest." This was one more gem for the Savior's crown, procured by that poor haunch-back's instrumentality, of which on earth he knew nothing.

Dear worker for God, work to God, and God alone. In a great sphere, or in a small sphere, be not over anxious about where, or when, or how, but work now, and ever work to God—WATCHMAN.

In Everything Give Thanks.

Almost everybody gives thanks to God for some things. Hardly anybody gives thanks to God for everything. Almost everybody admits that there are things from God which unmistakably call for thanks, whether he is faithful in giving thanks for them or not. Hardly anybody is ready to admit that all things from God alike call for thanks to God. Almost everybody, in fact, takes it upon himself to decide for himself what things are worth thanking God for, and what things are to be excluded from the sphere of man's thankfulness.

When a day of state or of national thanksgiving is appointed, the president or the governor points out causes of thankfulness to God as he, the human ruler, looks at them; and commonly he names those things which well-nigh everybody would agree with him in counting as worthy to be named in such a list. And when pastors or people look back over the year, on an annual day of thanksgiving, they select out of all the incidents and experiences of the year very much such a list of causes of thankfulness as the chief magistrate of their state or their nation has already recounted in his proclamation. Whatever they may add to the list as peculiarly personal to themselves is likely to be in the same general direction. And in doing this, they feel that they show a spirit of thankfulness quite as much in their recognition of what it is that really demands their thanks, as in their willing rendering of the thanks demanded. But this is not according to the Bible directions for thankfulness. The Bible rule, the rule by which Christians profess to be guided, is, "In *everything*, give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."—*Sunday-School Times.*

Preaching Should be Suitable to the People.

"And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it:" Mark 4: 33. Not as he was able to have spoken; he could have expressed himself at a higher rate than any mortal man; he could have soared to the clouds; he could have knit such knots that they could never untie, but he would not; he delighted to speak to his hearers' shallow capacities. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now:" John 16: 12.—*Thomas Brooks.*